

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VALLETTA 1168

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MT

SUBJ: LABOR MP ASKS FOR SEPARATE SEAT

REF: VALLETTA 1486, JULY 18, 1973

1. LABOR MP PAUL CARACHI, ALSO ONE OF THE EDITORS OF GENERAL WORKERS UNION DAILY "MALTA NEWS," ASKED HOUSE SPEAKER ATTARD BEZZINA TO PROVIDE HIM WITH A SEAT INDEPENDENT OF BOTH LABOR AND THE OPPOSITION NATIONALISTS. THE SPEAKER PUT OFF HIS DECISION, BUT SAID THAT HE COULD NOT REDISTRIBUTE SEATING ON HIS OWN AND WOULD HAVE TO OBEY THE WISHES OF THE MAJORITY OF THE HOUSE.

2. CARACHI FROM TIME TO TIME HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF GOM (REFTEL). HIS REQUEST FOR A SEPARATE SEAT IS THE RESULT OF DIFFICULTIES WITH HIS COLLEAGUES CAUSED BY HIS CRITICAL QUESTIONING OF LABOR MINISTER CASSAR ON THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.

3. CARACHI CLAIMS THAT AS A RESULT OF HIS QUESTION HE AND
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HIS FAMILY HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO INTIMIDATION AND HIS CAR HAS

BEEN DAMAGED.AT THE SAME TIME HE MAINTAINS THAT HE IS A
STAUNCH LABORITE, BUT THAT IN A DEMOCRACY HE HAS THE RIGHT
AND DUTY TO ASK SUCH QUESTIONS.

4. COMMENTING ON CARACHI, SOME LABOR MPS TELL US, "HE'S A
MAVERICK, HE'S A WILD MAN," AND JUSTICE MINISTER BUTTIGIEG CALLED
HIM A "MADMAN" IN THE HOUSE. ANOTHERLABOR MP TOLD US THAT
"HE IS DRUNK EVERY MORNING BY TEN O'CLOCK." IN COMMENTING ON
THE ULTRA-SENSITIVITY OF THE LABOR PARTY, THEY SAY THAT IS IS
FINE TO CRITICIZE WITHIN THE PARTY, BUT PUBLIC CRITICISM SHOWS
WEAKNESS, DIVISIVENESS,AND PROVIDES AMMUNITION FOT EH
OPPOSITION.

5. COMMENT: CARACHI'S CLAIM OF INTIMIDATION IS PROBABLY
CORRECT, AND WE KNOW THAT HE HAS BEEN REGULARLY CRITICIZED AND
VIRTUALLY OSTRACIZED BY HIS COLLEAGUES. WHILE HE IS VOLATILE
AND STUBBORN, WE DO BELIEVE THAT HE WILL ACTUALLY CROSS
THE FLOOR, OR VOTE AGAINST GOM. EVEN IF HE WERE TO ABSTAIN OR
VOTE AGAINST, THE PARLAIMENTARY SITUATION WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED
AS LBOR WOULD STILL HAVE A TWO-VOTE MAJORITY.GETZ

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